GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1128
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2006
PLACES OF WORSHIP IN PAKISTAN
Khanna Shri Avinash Rai

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) The details of the places of worship of Hindus/Sikhs situated in Pakistan;

(b) The names of the bodies which maintain the said places of worship;

(c) Whether the Government proposes to issue special visa to visit the said places of worship ;

(d) If so, the details thereof;

(e) Whether the Government is aware of the seat of Baba Laloo Jasrai in Deepalpur, district Ukara;

(f) if so, the present condition of the said place of worship; (g) Whether the Government is making any arrangements for performing worship at the said place of worship; (h) If so, whether the Government proposes to provide funds to Pakistan for repairing the said place of worship; and (i) If not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

(a) There are several hundred places of worship of Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan. India signed a Bilateral Protocol with Pakistan in 1974 on visits of religious shrines. Presently fifteen places of worship in Pakistan come under the said Protocol where Indians may visit and worship. These include:

1. Gurudwara Shri Nankana Sahib (Rawalpindi)

2. Gurudwara Shri Panja Sahib (Rawalpindi)

3. Samadhi of Maharaj Ranjit Singh (Lahore)

4. Gurudwara Shri Dera Sahib (Lahore)

5. Gurudwara Janam Asthan (Lahore)

6. Gurudwara Deewan Khana (Lahore)

7. Gurudwara Shaheed Ganj, Singhanian, (Lahore)

8. Gurudwara Bhai Tara Singh (Lahore)

9. Gurudwara of Sixth Guru, Mozang, (Lahore)

10. Birthplace of Shri Guru Ram Das, (Lahore)

11. Gurudwara Cheveen Padshahi, Mozang (Lahore)

12. Shrine at Sree Katasraj

13. Shadani Darbar, Hyat Pitafi

14. Sadhu Bela, Khanpur and Mirpur Mathelo

15. Shrine of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh (Lahore)

(b) The places of worship under the charge of Government of Pakistan are maintained by the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB), Ministry of Religious Affairs. Some places are being maintained by local Hindu/Sikh communities. The historical Sikh Gurudwaras are

also maintained by the ETPB with the help of the Pakistan Sikh Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (PSGPC). Some temples of historical importance are also being maintained by the ETPB.

(c) & (d) Travel to these places is in accordance with the 1974 Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines. Members of the pilgrim groups are issued Visitor Category visas.

(e) to(i) In regard to the seat of Baba Laloo Jasrai in Dipalpur of Ukara district of Punjab province of Pakistan, Government is aware of concern of devotees about the condition of the shrine. The upkeep of the shrine is the responsibility of the local authorities. At present there is no proposal of providing funds to Pakistan for repairing of the said place of worship.